
Gordon Brown has said he looks forward to working with Barack Obama and said he had run "an inspirational campaign". There have been messages of congratulations on similar lines from governments around the world. Mike Wooldridge reports:

If this is a **"Mandela moment"** for America, there were - perhaps inevitably - **few specific clues** in Barack Obama's victory speech as to how that will **work its way through on to** the world stage. But for those who have objected to American **unilateralism** during the Bush years there was the commitment to listening, the promise - in Mr Obama's words - of **a new dawn of** American leadership, **coupled** with the pledge to defeat those who "would **tear this world down**".

Among the reaction from Europe, President Sarkozy said the American people had chosen "change, openness and optimism". And the European Commission president, Jose Manuel Barroso, said "we need a new deal for a new world".

Iraq's foreign minister **was quick to tell** Mr Obama that there was **"a great deal at stake"** in Iraq and he did not foresee a quick **US disengagement**, while President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan said he hoped the election would bring peace, life and prosperity to his country.

Managing such expectations abroad, as well as at home, will clearly be one of Mr Obama's biggest challenges.

Mike Wooldridge, BBC

Vocabulary and definitions

a "Mandela moment"	this is a reference to the time when Nelson Mandela became the first black post-apartheid President of South Africa
few specific clues	not much detailed explanation
work its way through on to	reach, make felt and bring results on
unilateralism	when a person, organisation or, as here, a country takes decisions without consulting or listening to others
a new dawn of	a new, fresh approach to; another way of asserting
coupled	coming together
tear this world down	destroy the world (literally, if you tear down a building, you demolish or dismantle it)
was quick to tell	told immediately/without delay
a great deal at stake	a lot at risk of being lost
US disengagement	end of US presence/involvement (in Iraq)

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